

Week Before Inauguration Offers Nothing Startling in Local Playhouses

Brutus of D. R. MacLean Declared Best in America

Bernstein's Latest Drama Comes to the National. "The Merry Countess" Will Take on Aspect of Strauss Festival at the Belasco.

By JULIA CHANDLER MANE.

When it became known to Mr. L. Stoddard Taylor, manager of the Belasco Theater, that Tyrone Power had severed his contract with William Faversham's Shakespearean company, he wired the actor-manager that it was his opinion that he could not find in all America so great a Brutus as R. D. MacLean. Mr. Power's temperamental fit, which caused his withdrawal from the Faversham organization, was ill-timed, as far as any possibility of taking advantage of Mr. Taylor's suggestion was concerned, for Mr. MacLean was already embarked upon a highly successful season of Shakespearean revivals, in combination with Charles B. Hanford, Odette Tyler, and Marie Drofman, and was, therefore, not available as a substitute for Mr. Power in the Faversham production of "Julius Caesar," a circumstance which makes the stage the gainer for Mr. Faversham secured, in the person of Tyrone Power, a singularly human and appealing Brutus, and this week we shall see Mr. MacLean's portrayal of the role at the Columbia Theater on Tuesday evening, a characterization which has been so filled with power as to have awakened the enthusiasm of critics and public alike wherever the MacLean-Hanford, Drofman-Tyler company has been seen since the beginning of its extended tour last fall.

The week of classic revivals at the Columbia Theater will be inaugurated to-morrow night with "Othello," which will be repeated Thursday and Saturday evenings, with Mr. Hanford in the title role, Mr. Hanford as Iago, Miss Tyler as Desdemona, and Miss Drofman as Emilia. Tuesday evening we shall see "Julius Caesar," followed by "The Merchant of Venice" on Wednesday evening and Thursday matinee, with "Romeo and Juliet" Friday evening and Saturday matinee.

Johann Strauss' melodious spirit will set "The Merry Countess" waiting in the Belasco Theater all this week, the operetta coming here with the same exceptional cast which won such high praise for it when it was produced in the Casino Theater, in New York, last August.

"The Merry Countess" is a revision of the Strauss operetta formerly known as "Die Fledermaus" ("Night Birds"), in which Fritz Schell was seen in the Belasco Theater in this city about a year ago. The larger portion of the original book has been dropped, but the melodious dance music, written by the Viennese waiter king, has been so picked up here and there that the performance is said to take on the aspect of a regular Strauss festival.

Miss Gladys Unger dragged the old book of "Die Fledermaus" out of the dust and has flavored it with a wit which, combined with the luring strains of Strauss' music, has secured a brilliant success for "The Merry Countess" in the Belasco Theater.

The operetta is unusually well cast, headed by Jose Collins, who but five years ago made her debut in the London music hall, where Lee Shubert found her one fine day and brought her over for the New York Winter Garden, where, even last year, she seemed just a wisp of a girl who was dancing her level best and warbling her sweetest in order to keep a foothold on the Shubert pay roll. Then last August came the premiere of "The Merry Countess" in the Casino Theater, and, lo! little Miss Collins was a twinkling star, whose brilliant rendition of the difficult "Cardas" aria in "The Merry Countess" surprised the most blasé of critics into singing her praises.

Fritzie von Busing, who is the dainty singing comedienne of "The Merry Countess," is the daughter of Frederick von Busing, one time distinguished concert master of the Boston Symphony Orchestra.

Miss von Busing, who created the prima donna role in Faderewski's opera, "Mamon," starred in Princess "Chiel," was prima donna of the famous Casino Square Opera Company in Boston, and, in turn, is the wife of Forest Huff, the light comedian of "The Merry Countess" season.

Other notables of "The Merry Countess" company are Maurice Farkas, who first came to America with "The Artist's Model," and popularized the famous

"Laughing Song," Mabel Burnage, the famous English beauty; the Dolly twins, who sang their first American hit in terpsichorean art at the New York Winter Garden; Lynn Graham, premier danseuse, and others equally as delightful to contemplate in combination with the captivating music of Johann Strauss.

John Mason comes this week to the National Theater in the latest of Henry Bernstein's dramas, "The Attack," which aroused so much interest during its career at the Gymnasium Theater, in Paris, that Charles Frohman secured the American rights, having Mr. Mason in mind at the time for the stellar role, which was created in the French by Lucien Guitry.

Both the American star and the French dramatist have established a large following in this country. The Bernstein dramas which have had the most brilliant success are "The Thief," "Israel," "Brother Jacques," and "Famson," which was used by William Gillette.

John Mason, whose real name is Hill Belcher, is an American by birth, who made his first appearance on the stage at the age of twenty in the Walnut Street Theater, Philadelphia. During that season he appeared in a number of notable plays, supporting such stars as Lawrence Barrett, Mary Anderson, Lotie Collins, Joseph K. Emmet, James C. Williamson, Miss Jananuchek, Fanny Davenport, and Frank C. Bangs. From the beginning of which remarkable apprenticeship Mr. Mason displayed his prodigious ability of an unusual order, having since scored many notable successes, the best remembered of which were in "The Witching Hour" and "As a Man Thinks," in which latter play Mr. Mason was seen in the Belasco Theater here last season.

Lina Cavalieri, who will appear at the Columbia Theater Wednesday afternoon of this week, was the original Thais when the opera was first produced in Paris, some months prior to the American production. Of all the singers in the opera world, Compose Massenet selected Cavalieri as his ideal Thais, and her interpretation of the role has been an inspiration and a challenge to all others who attempt the part.

Cavalieri was born in Rome, Italy, Christmas Day, 1855. As a child she danced in the streets of Rome, and later became a dancer. Her beauty brought her to the attention of the King of Italy, who arranged for her musical education under the direction of Lombardi. Her opera debut, outside of Italy, was in Lisbon in 1880. Her first American appearance was at the Metropolitan Opera House, December 5, 1905, with Caruso. She has been absent from America three years.

"The Painted Woman," the romantic play in four acts, by Frederick Arnold Kummer, which had its premiere in Baltimore two weeks ago, and which was seen here last week in the Belasco Theater, went into the hands of the doctor last night for reconstruction in some of its parts, after which it will be presented in New York.

Had the piece done nothing more than afford Florence Reed an opportunity to acquaint the public with the realism of her emotional power, it would not have been in vain, for, in the title role of the Kummer drama, she fulfilled the promise of smaller roles, proving herself an emotional actress whose finesse of technique would do credit to an artist of twice her age and stage experience.

Aside from Miss Reed's remarkable portrayal of the Spanish heroine of the play, "The Painted Woman," with its wealth of tropical scenery, picturesque costumes, and underlying stratum of primitive emotions, has so many points of interest that when the weakness of the fourth act is remedied it is safe to predict its success.

In its recent construction interest reaches its height at the close of the second act, when the one great climax of the story comes, leaving the piratical tale of the seventeenth century without the continued suspense necessary to retain interest through the two acts which follow.

In the reconstructed presentation of the play, some changes will be made in the minor roles. The principals of the cast will remain as seen here last week.

GERTRUDE BONDHILL POLI'S

"Julius Caesar," while Mr. Hanford will be seen as Mark Antony, Miss Tyler as Portia, and Miss Drofman as Calpurnia.

When "The Merchant of Venice" is presented, Mr. MacLean will act Shylock, Miss Drofman, Portia, Miss Tyler, Nerissa, and Mr. Hanford, Gratiano.

"Romeo and Juliet" will bring forward Mr. MacLean as Romeo, Miss Tyler as Juliet, Mr. Hanford as Mercutio, and Miss Drofman as the nurse.

With a view of perfecting the organization, great care was exercised in completing the ensemble of players. Only those who had been closely identified with the classic drama were engaged, thereby making it possible for the leaders to benefit by the experience so absolutely necessary to a supporting company presenting a Shakespearean repertoire.

Great care has further been given to details of scenery and costumes.

Columbia-Nox McCain Traveling. To-night at the Columbia Theater, Nox McCain will commence his course of five "travel lectures de luxe" in Washington this season. The subject this evening, to be repeated to-morrow afternoon at 2:45, will be "Canada and the Canadian Rockies."

Mr. McCain has made various trips across Canada from coast to coast, and has found it a fertile field for camera studies. The quaint old cities in the East, with their narrow streets and curious types, the grandeur of the Northern Rockies, and the wonderful new cities in the West, with their business and bustle, all lend themselves admirably to photographic reproduction.

Not the least charm of Mr. McCain's lecture on Canada is that it is an entirely new subject. Travel lectures as a rule have flown farther afield for their material.

At the conclusion of his lecture on Canada to-night, Mr. McCain will intrude for a few feet upon American soil, and show a wonderful motion picture of Niagara Falls—a picture that has won well-warranted applause in every other city of his various circuits.

Chase's Polite Vaudeville. Chase's this week will present William H. Thompson and a capable supporting company, including Alice Wilson, J. H. Greene, and Fred Webber, in the London Haymarket Theater success, "An Object Lesson," by Frederic Sargent. It is described as "involving the eternal human triangle with a peculiar twist to it."

The extra added attraction will be Jesse L. Lasky's new musical excursion, "The Houseboat Party," with Wilfred Berrier, Lily Dean Hart, Donald Archer, the Shaw twins, Ethel and Elsie, and a company of Broadway players cast as principals in Fourth of July revels.

The action is supposed to occur on the prettily decorated houseboat "Wahine," on the Crookshank River, New Hampshire. The music is by William Le Baron and Bert Angeles staged the production.

Another feature will be the London Armistice comedy favorites, Armstrong and Ford, in their music hall hit, "Heard on the Sidewalk," in which they appear as "The English Johnny and the Cop."

The recently imported Tom Davies trio is also conspicuous, and will present its series of cycle-whirl feats in "motoring in mid-air."

Edwin George is in the list of mythical novelties. The English pantomime success, the Geo-Jays, will give their unique miniature music hall performance.

The kinecolor photo play will be the Western drama, "The Call of the Blood." The pipe organ recitals will offer musical treat.

Poli's "The Man of the Hour." George H. Broadhurst's political comedy, "The Man of the Hour," will be the attraction at Poli's this week.

The play enjoyed a wonderful road success, following its long metropolitan run. The leading figure in the play is Always Bennett, a wealthy young society man who finds his opportunity to do good when he is tendered the nomination for mayor of a large city.

The politicians expect him to prove a facile tool in their hands, but when they set in motion their graft machinery they find that this young man has suddenly awakened to the fact that it is the people's votes that have elected him to an office of trust and that it is the people's rights that he must protect. The conflict between the enraged boss and the resolute young mayor is one of the most engrossing chapters in the history of the modern stage.

A young woman who has faith in Bennett and who spurs him on in his fight for civic righteousness, is the main spring of the play. It is she who furnishes the inspiration for him to continue his work.

The title role will be impersonated by A. H. Van Buren, with Isotta Jewel as the heroine, Mark Kent as one of the political bosses, and Thomas Williams as the rival bossing house as himself.

"The Man of the Hour" is a play of the present time and the scene is any large American city.

Academy—The Country Boy. This week the Academy will offer the Henry H. Harris estate's production of the comedy success, "The Country Boy."

The play is a comedy by Edgar Selwyn. The events are of daily occurrences, and the people characterized are of the everyday life. Mr. Selwyn has not sought glittering things nor dazzling people to make a great play, just simplicity, true and vital in its universality of appeal.

The story deals with a country boy, spurred on by the boarding-house of his boyhood days, to seek his fortune in a big city, who falls there, not through inefficiency, but rather to the fact of his fascination for a chorus girl, domiciled in the same boarding-house as himself.

Spurns him when he thinks he most needs her; he has lost his position in the city; his childhood sweetheart and her father, who have called at the boarding-house, both call off the engagement; he is about ready to end it all by the gas route, when a broken-down newspaper man enters the room and frustrates the deed by a heart-to-heart talk. Between the newspaper man and Joe Weinstein, a gem in the rough, the situation is finally cleared, whereby the country boy



JOHN MASON AND MARTHA HEDMAN—NATIONAL



SAM RICE LYCEUM



LINA CAVALIERI IN CONCERT COLUMBIA FEB. 26



JOSE COLLINS AND MAURICE FARKAS BELASCO



JULIA DEAN BELASCO-MCH3



CARMEN LEVEE GAYETY



ODETTE TYLER



NOX MCCAIN COLUMBIA



BILLIE BURKE NATIONAL-MCH.3



MARIE DROFMAN

IN SHAKESPEAREAN REPORTOIRE—COLUMBIA

WEEK'S PLAYBILLS

National—John Mason in "The Attack."

John Mason will be the welcome tenant of the National this week. Under Charles Frohman's direction he returns here in a new play by Henry Bernstein, one of the leading dramatists of the present day. This is "The Attack," which enjoyed a three months' run in New York—almost as long as the original run of the play at the Gymnasium, in Paris. Mr. Mason, who is the dominant role originated by Lucien Guitry, and the role of the heroine will be sustained by a young Swedish actress, Martha Hedman, who Yorked by her acting as Renee de Roud.

Mertal, Mr. Mason's role, is a man in his fifties, but still in his prime in body and mind and ambition and achievement. Beginning as a lawyer, he has entered politics, risen to statemanship and bids fair to carry the next chamber, which will make his prime minister of France. In his private life he lives in his happiness with his sons, grown to manhood, and with a daughter in her first youth. A guest in his household is Renee de Roud, a beautiful young woman who has come to love Mertal. He wishes her to marry one of his sons, but succeeds only in extorting from her the confession that she is in love with himself. Then, almost in spite of himself, his own spirit answers as honestly and intuitively to the young girl's love.

Then follows a great scene between Mertal and old Fripeau, who has been his ally and counselor in the forming of the new party he represents. Felted friendship, Fripeau ferments an intrigue that shall wreck Mertal's career by the circulation of a scandal of his youth. Mertal surmises, suspects, apprehends and makes ready to fight the devil with his own fire. For Fripeau's career has been by no means stainless. In fact he has laid the foundation of his present fortune by bribe-taking that was the means of blackmailing. Mertal assembles his proofs, sits down face to face with Fripeau, ironically unmasking him and sends him away ready to make an end of the scandal over Mertal that he may avert a scandal over himself.

The duel of words is over when Mertal comes Renee. The avowed he makes to her is inevitable. Renee hears him to the end and tells him that what he has done to repair the fault of a part of her ideal and his avowed has sealed and strengthened it. "The Attack" is declared to be Bernstein's greatest play.

Belasco—"The Merry Countess."

"The Merry Countess," which is conceded to be the most remarkable musical comedy success of the current season, and which is said to be a companion production to "The Passing Show of 1912" and "The Whirl of Society," will be the attraction at the Belasco this week.

The cast of "The Merry Countess," which has been widely advertised, consists of the following stars: Jose Collins, who is famous not only on account of being the daughter of Lotie Collins, of the Casino Theater, but also for her unusual voice and wonderful rendition of the great "Cardas" song in the second act of "The Merry Countess." Maurice Farkas, the eminent "Chaunter" who sings the "Just That You Are You" to the tune of "The Beautiful Blue Danube" has been acclaimed a classic; Forest Huff, the beautiful Dolly Twins; Lynn Graham, the well-known classic dancer; Martin Brown, one of Broadway's special favorites; A. W. Baskcomb; Tom A. Shale; Claude Fleming; Frank Farrington and Mabel Burnage.

New in importance to the cast and music is the chorus of precious young stage beauties. The girls have much to do with the kaleidoscope splendor of the times fairly dazzling with gorgeous colors.

Columbia—Shakespearean Repertoire.

The most popular playwright of the season, in point of repeated revival—Mr. Shakespeare, of course—again will furnish a week's entertainment, this time at the Columbia.

R. D. MacLean, Charles B. Hanford, Odette Tyler, Marie Drofman, and their associates players begin their engagement at that theater to-morrow night with "Othello." The story of the Moor will be repeated Thursday and Saturday nights. "Julius Caesar" has been chosen for Tuesday night. "The Merchant of Venice" will be seen Wednesday night and Thursday matinee, and "Romeo and Juliet" will be the offering Friday night and Saturday matinee.

In "Othello," Mr. MacLean will play the Moor, Mr. Hanford, Iago; Miss Tyler, Desdemona, and Miss Drofman, Emilia. Mr. MacLean will appear as Brutus in

returns to his home town, and starts a newspaper there, an ambition long dreamed of by him.

Gayety—"The Merry Go Rounders."

George P. Murphy heads the cast of funmakers who comprise the "Merry Go Rounders" company which comes to the Gayety this week in "Let George Do It," a two-act musical farce in four scenes. Mr. Murphy, who first attracted attention as the comical "foe-goodness-sakes" waiter in "The Newly Weds," impersonates a German janitor in the new entertainment and he is said to have the biggest opportunities of his career in the lines which have been provided for him by Aaron Hoffman and Paul West.

The feminine cast is headed by Edna Reming, who is an exceptional dancer and a gifted singer. Miss Reming's chief specialty will be a terpsichorean number with her "dancing dollies." Another clever member of the large cast is La Petite, the French toe dancer.

There are sixteen musical numbers in the piece and many of these require elaborate and bizarre costumes for the chorus, which numbers twenty-five pretty young women.

Comos—Vaudeville.

The Five Original Tyrolean Troubadours, in native costume, who are promised at the Comos Theater this week, will include their famous yodeling songs and national dances. Douglas A. Flint, with a company of four, will present a comedy entitled "The Mizers," and Evans and Vidco, with a farcical absurdity, "The New Assistant," are expected to share in the laughing honors of the bill.

The B. Julian, foreign equilibrist and "rapid down dancer," are billed; Belle Meyers, a clever comedienne with a pretty voice, is promised in a new galaxy of songs and mile, Nalles, the singing and dancing violinist, in an offering described as dainty and delightful. The famous Pathé Weekly Review, picturing the unusual occurrences throughout the world, will head the film features.

Hubenstein's "Kammemel Ostrod," Michael's descriptive piece, "The Forge in the Forest," Silberberg's humorous

"Dance of the Pirates," Harman's air de ballet, "Ballerina" and Suppe's overture, "Pique Dame" will be features of the orchestral concert at the Comos Theater which begins this afternoon at 2 o'clock, and continues uninterrupted until 10:30 o'clock to-night.

Appropriate vocal numbers will vary the instrumental program, which will contain a galaxy of selections of the best type played by the Comos chamber symphony orchestra of ten pieces.

Casino—Vaudeville.

The biggest laugh of the season is promised at the Casino Theater this week in "My Wife Won't Let Me," a farcical offering, which will be presented by William Franklyn and his company of four people. A real novelty is promised in "The Musical Diary," by which the act of Beltrah and Beltrah is described, and "the king of piano accordions" in Foesita whose music is said to range from the lilting, swaying rhythm of latter day melodies to the classics of the masters.

An exhibition of magic and optical illusion will be given by Carlos Gultresco, "the Mexican Hermann," and his company, famed for feats of mystery. Tunes and Ralston will be seen in a musical diversion entitled "The Headliner" and Preston, the foreign acrobatic clown, in a characteristic comical compound of crazy athletics. These reels of new and enjoyable photoplays are promised to open and close each performance.

Lyceum—Sam Rice's "Daffydills."

Presenting two musical burlesques, the first entitled, "The Daffydills on Broadway," and the second "Maximus," or "The Land of the Gilt," the "Daffydills" come to the Lyceum this week.

Both of these pieces the author, Sam Rice, has designed solely as a panacea for the blues, and to send the audience home in a pleasant frame of mind.

trusted with the principal feminine parts.

Friday night "The Country Store" will have its first spring opening.

Panama Exhibit.

Great interest continues to be shown in the wonderful working model of the Panama Canal, which is on exhibit at 121 G Street Northwest, daily, with a most interesting lecture at intervals of thirty minutes from 10 a. m. to 3 p. m.

Many local public and private school classes, representatives of local business organizations, members of the local army, navy, diplomatic, and legislative circles have been interested visitors at this exhibition and shown keen appreciation of the details of this model of the Panama Canal, the Pedro Miguel locks, Gatun Dam, Culebra Cut, spillway, and all the other points of interest.

Sunday Concert at the Garden.

An excellent bill of high-class vaudeville feature photoplays and a musical programme by the Garden symphony orchestra of ten will go to make up the attractions of to-day. People's popular concert at the Garden Theater.

Announcement is made by the management of the showing on Wednesday, Thursday of this week of the beautiful feature film, "A Daughter of the Confederacy," in which the famous Gene Gaultier is the star actress of a very excellent company, and on Friday and Saturday Marion Leonard in "As in a Looking Glass" will be stellar attractions. According to all reports, Miss Leonard is at her best as a photoplay actress in this production.

POLI PLAYERS TO GIVE NO MATINEE MARCH 4

The management at Poli's has arranged to have erected over the entrance of the theater a special grand stand for the use of the members of the company on inauguration day. There will be no matinee on March 4, but there will be a performance of "The Gamblers" on Monday afternoon, March 5. This will be the second time that the Poli Players will have given a Monday matinee. The other occasion was on Labor Day last year.

CAVALIERI DOES NOT BELIEVE IN MARRIAGE

"I most certainly do not believe in marriage for a grand opera singer," said Lina Cavalieri, the world famous Italian prima donna, who is making a three months' concert tour of America, and who will appear with Lucien Muratore, tenor, of the Paris Opera House, at the Columbia Theater Wednesday afternoon.

"A singer belongs to the public. She cannot also belong to a husband. Prima donna husbands are the joke of the world. Suppose he is jealous—he suffers, and he takes precious good care that his wife shares the suffering. The husband cannot understand her success nor her popularity. A man may say to her: 'Madame, you sang enchantingly this evening.' Immediately her husband suspects her of a flirtation, and there are scenes of recriminations. Then the artist has nothing to give her public if she has to expiate her own that way."

"Of course if the two were artists and interested in the same work it would be different. It would then be a case of 'I love you because you love the things I love.' I do not say this always would be the case—I mean I do not say such marriages would all be successes, but it is very probable they would be happy."

BELASCO THEATER TO PRESENT LECTURE ON BALKAN WAR

The J. B. Pond Lyceum Bureau takes pleasure in announcing that it has arranged with Andrew Hamilton, F. R. G. S., for a short American-Canadian lecture tour beginning February 15, 1913. He will lecture on "The Balkan Wars, the Crushing of the Turk," Mr. Hamilton, who has been a correspondent of note in all the recent wars, was the representative at the front for the Central News Agency, Limited. Delegated to the Turkish side, he soon made his way through many obstacles to the firing line, and was one of but two men who would be seen fighting. Mr. Hamilton will be heard at the Belasco Theater Sunday night, March 3.

Katherine Grey has been engaged for one of the leading roles in "A Man's Friends."